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Terrorist Skyjackings

A statistical overview of terrorist skyjackings from January 1968 through June 1982

July 1982

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Skyjacking: *The seizure of an airplane, with whatever hostages may be on board, to force some action, whether it be movement to another country or agreement by the authorities involved to some other demand.*

Terrorist Skyjacking: *The seizure of an airplane through the use or threat of violence for political purposes by individuals or groups. Terrorists use skyjackings to force authorities to agree to their demands, most frequently for money or the release of imprisoned terrorists, or to publicize perceived grievances.*

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Terrorist Skyjackings

According to our records, 684 skyjackings have been attempted since January 1968, approximately 9 percent of all terrorist attacks since that date. These attempts have resulted in at least 500 deaths and 400 injuries. More than one-third of the hijackers demanded passage to Cuba. Nearly 40 percent of the aircraft belonged to US airlines, most notably Eastern, National, and TWA.

Trends

The number of attempted skyjackings reached a high in 1969-70, declined slightly in 1971-72, decreased by half in 1973, and has remained fairly constant since then. The declines resulted from increased public support for measures to counter the skyjacking threat; the 1970 multiple skyjacking by Palestinian terrorists was the catalyst for the Hague and Montreal conventions on aerial hijacking. In January 1973, luggage inspection and the full screening of boarding passengers were instituted in the United States and at international airports in other countries, reducing the total number of attempted skyjackings in 1973 to half that of the previous year. The US Federal Aviation Administration reports that more than 20,000 firearms have been detected since those security measures were instituted.

Of the 684 skyjacking attempts since January 1968, we consider 108 to have been terrorist (that is, politically motivated) skyjackings. More than one-third of these resulted in casualties, numbering 212 dead and 186 wounded. Terrorist skyjacking incidents were initiated in 43 countries and ended in 47 countries, most of them in Latin America, Western Europe, and the Middle East. Forty-seven terrorist groups, of which almost half were Palestinian and Latin American, claimed credit for the skyjackings.

The number of terrorist skyjacking attempts was highest in the early 1970s; it declined by half in 1973, as did all skyjacking attempts, because of increased airport security. Between 1973 and 1980, terrorists averaged five skyjacking attempts per year. A significant increase occurred in 1981. This was partly attributable to the successful Pakistan Liberation Army skyjack in March, which probably encouraged other attempts; increases in terrorist and insurgent activities in Central America and northern South America contributed to increases in terrorist skyjackings there. Four terrorist skyjackings have taken place thus far in 1982, suggesting a probable decrease for the year from the 1981 total.

Skyjackings in 1982

There were 10 skyjackings through June of 1982, of which four were terrorist skyjackings. Two occurred in Latin America, and in both cases the terrorists were granted asylum in Cuba. In the third case, the terrorists were granted asylum in Syria; in the fourth, they voluntarily surrendered to British authorities. No one was killed in a terrorist skyjacking in the first half of 1982; five people were wounded. Guns were used in all four attempts, and explosives were used in all but one.

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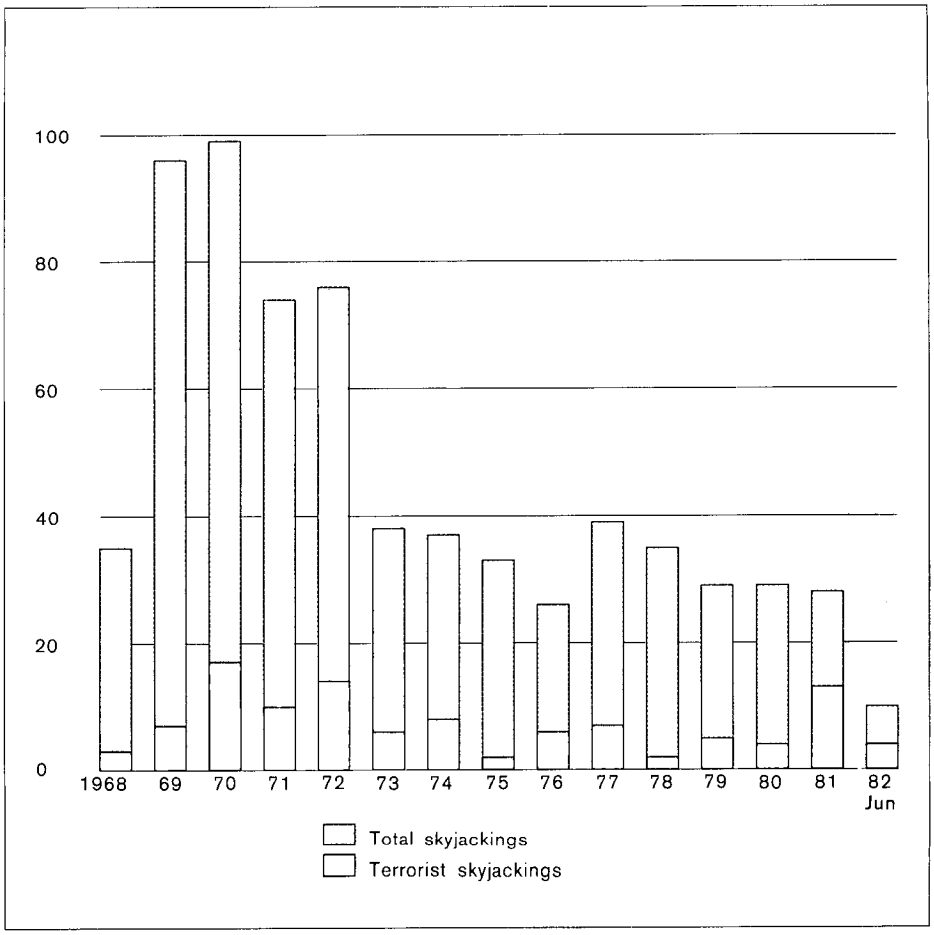
Total Skyjackings and Terrorist Skyjackings

January 1968–June 1982



Terrorist Groups

A total of 48 terrorist groups—or 416 individual terrorists—have claimed credit for skyjackings since the beginning of 1968 (see appendix A). Of the 47 terrorist groups responsible for skyjackings, six were Palestinian and 14 were Latin American; the Palestinians accounted for 20 percent and the Latin Americans for 21 percent of all terrorist skyjackings. The Palestinian groups were most active in the early 1970s; they have not claimed responsibility for a skyjacking since 1977. Their most frequent targets were Israeli airlines.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) has attempted more skyjackings than any other group, and its skyjackings have often had major political consequences. Five PFLP skyjackings were concurrent. In September 1970, 11 members of the PFLP attempted to hijack five aircraft to the Jordanian desert, where they hoped to bargain for the release of Palestinians jailed throughout Europe. Three aircraft were diverted to Dawson's Field in Jordan, where they were destroyed by explosives. The passengers were rescued by Jordanian troops; seven Arab guerrillas were eventually released from

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European jails in response to the skyjackers' demands. The Jordanian troops launched a full-scale military campaign to drive the Palestinian guerrilla groups out of Jordan. The incident resulted in the activation of Black September (BSO), which has since been the most active of Palestinian terrorist groups. In 1976, the PFLP hijacked an Air France aircraft to Entebbe, Uganda, precipitating a successful Israeli commando raid on the airport to rescue the passengers; in 1977, German commandos stormed a hijacked Lufthansa plane in Mogadiscio, Somalia, after PFLP members killed the pilot. Our records show that the PFLP has not been involved in a skyjacking attempt since 1976; it claimed responsibility for 13 during 1968-76.

The Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), an Ethiopian separatist group, also claimed responsibility for numerous skyjacking attempts. The ELF was most active in 1969; our records show only one attempted skyjacking since 1972. The group's targets were primarily Ethiopian domestic flights.

The Latin American terrorist groups have maintained a low level of skyjacking activity since January 1968, with a sharp increase in 1981, when they claimed responsibility for six skyjackings. The increase was partly attributable to Bandera Roja's multiple skyjacking on 7 December 1981, the first multiple event since the Dawson's Field incident in 1970. Eleven gunmen hijacked three Venezuelan airliners on domestic flights, ultimately diverting them to Havana with intermediate stops in Colombia, Honduras, Guatemala, and Panama. Their demands, which included a ransom of $10 million and release of seven Venezuelan political prisoners, were not met. They were taken into custody by Cuban authorities. Latin American terrorists have exclusively targeted Latin American airlines, especially those of Colombia and Venezuela.

Other prominent groups that have attempted skyjackings include Fatah (through BSO), the Japanese Red Army (JRA), and the People's Revolutionary Army of Argentina. (See appendix A for a complete list.)

Skyjackings Resulting in Injuries or Deaths

- On 17 December 1973, prior to hijacking a Lufthansa aircraft, Palestinian terrorists threw grenades into a plane loading in Rome for a flight to Beirut, killing or injuring numerous passengers, including 14 Americans.

- On 21 November 1974, four members of the Arab Nationalist Youth Organization for the Liberation of Palestine diverted a British Airways flight to Tunis, where they killed a passenger in public view to speed up negotiations for the release of fedayeen prisoners.

- On 21 May 1976, six members of the Moro National Liberation Front hijacked a plane to Zamboanga, where Philippine troops engaged them in a gun battle that left 10 passengers and three hijackers dead and 22 passengers wounded.

We recorded 40 terrorist skyjackings between January 1968 and June 1982 that resulted in death or personal injury:

1968	1
1969	4
1970	6
1971	3
1972	3
1973	1
1974	2
1975	2
1976	4
1977	5
1978	0
1979	1
1980	1
1981	4
1982	3

The number of these skyjackings has fluctuated in no discernible patterns, with high counts in 1970 and 1977, and a low count in 1978. Three such incidents have occurred in the first half of 1982, in contrast to four in all of 1981.

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A total of 164 passengers and crew and 29 terrorists (a combined total of 193) have been injured as a result of skyjackings since January 1968; five were US citizens. Fifteen US citizens have died, 14 in the 1973 Rome incident. Over half of the skyjackings that resulted in casualties occurred in Western Europe and the Middle East. Twenty-five terrorist groups claimed responsibility for these incidents, most often the PFLP, the ELF, and the JRA.

Locations of Skyjackings

Between January 1968 and June 1982, planes originating in over 40 countries were skyjacked, with Lebanon the most frequent point of origin. Planes originating in the United States, Israel, Ethiopia, India, Colombia, and Venezuela were also frequent targets. The skyjackers' most frequent boarding point was also Lebanon.

Nearly 40 percent of all terrorist skyjackers demanded passage to three countries: Cuba, Libya, and Jordan. The actual diversion point was most often Cuba, with Lebanon, Libya, Jordan, and Egypt less frequent destinations.

Two-thirds of all terrorist skyjackings since January 1968 have occurred in Latin America, the Middle East, and Western Europe. Only 7 percent have occurred in North America (see map).

The Operation

In over half of the attempted skyjackings since January 1968 the terrorists used an explosive device—or the threat of one—to take over the aircraft. Terrorists used guns in at least 33 skyjackings.

Our records of the negotiation process, including terrorist demands and government responses, while incomplete, indicate distinct trends. The skyjackers' most frequent demands have been for the release of political prisoners and safe passage to another country. Government responses to skyjacker demands have been about equally divided among compromise, capitulation, and no response.

Incomplete records show that the countries to which skyjackers most often direct their demands are Israel, Venezuela, and Lebanon. These countries are not, however, those whose airliners are hijacked most frequently: US aircraft have been skyjacked most often. British, West German, and Israeli airliners have been frequent targets. Skyjackers were granted asylum most frequently by Cuba, Algeria, and Libya. Other countries granting safe haven included Dubai, Iraq, Lebanon, North Korea, South Yemen, Syria, Tunisia, and Uganda.

Outcome

Terrorists achieved logistic success, or were able to divert the aircraft to desired destinations, in 70 percent of their attempted skyjackings between January 1968 and June 1982. The pattern of successful skyjackings across time suggests that success breeds other attempts and, conversely, failure discourages such action.

On 2 March 1981, three members of the Pakistan Liberation Army seized a Pakistani plane and diverted it to Afghanistan. Soviet authorities in Kabul made no effort to terminate the hijacking, and after unsuccessful negotiations with Pakistani officials, the terrorists ordered the plane flown to Syria. Further negotiations resulted in the release of 54 Pakistani prisoners in exchange for the release of the hostages on 2 March (figure 4). The terrorists, who were eventually freed by Syrian authorities, received extensive media coverage. The PLA's success probably encouraged subsequent attempts—including the hijacking of an Indonesian plane to Thailand on 28 March by five members of a fanatic Muslim group, four of whom were killed

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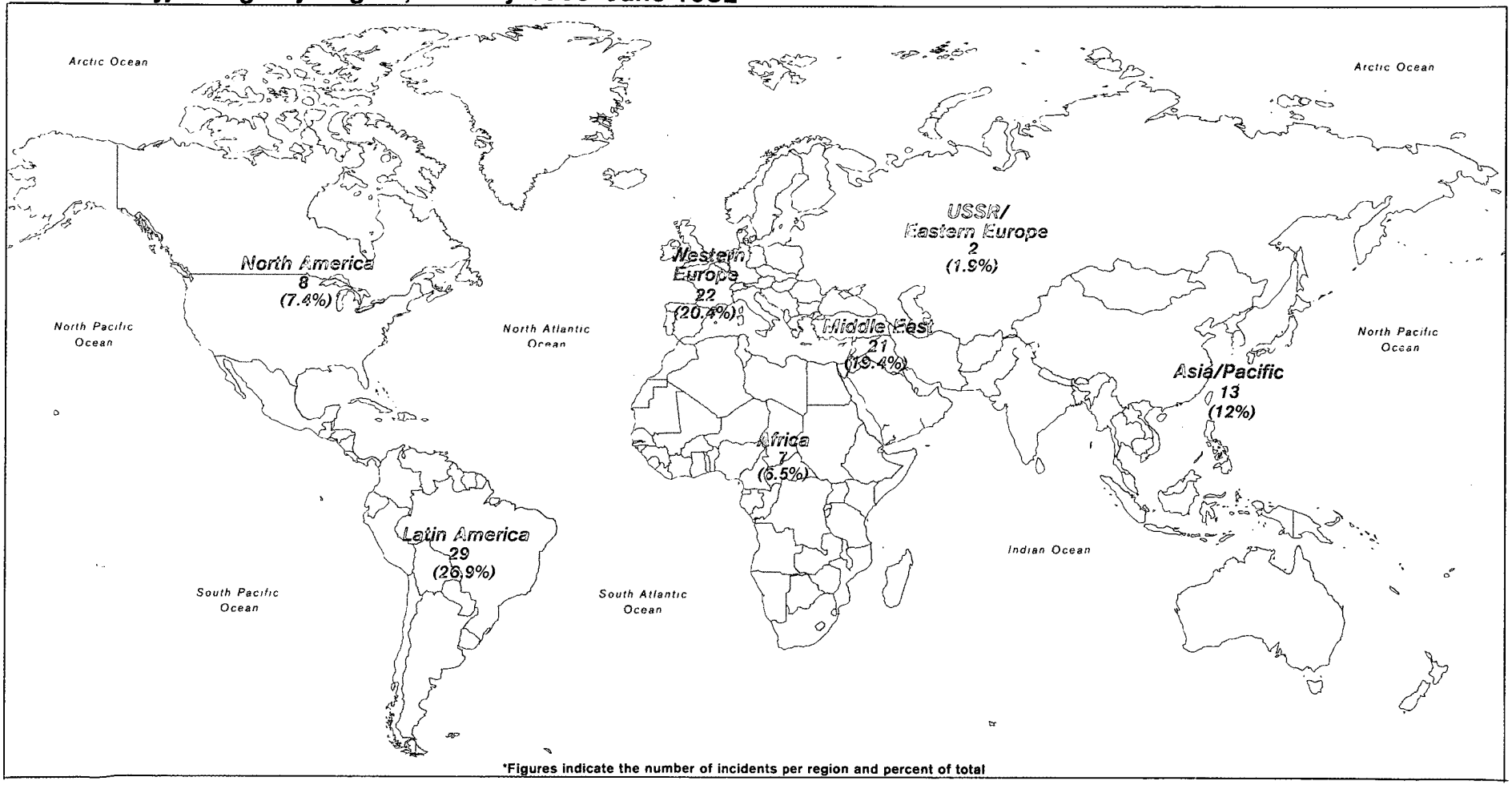
Terrorist Skyjackings by Region, January 1968–June 1982*



*Figures indicate the number of incidents per region and percent of total

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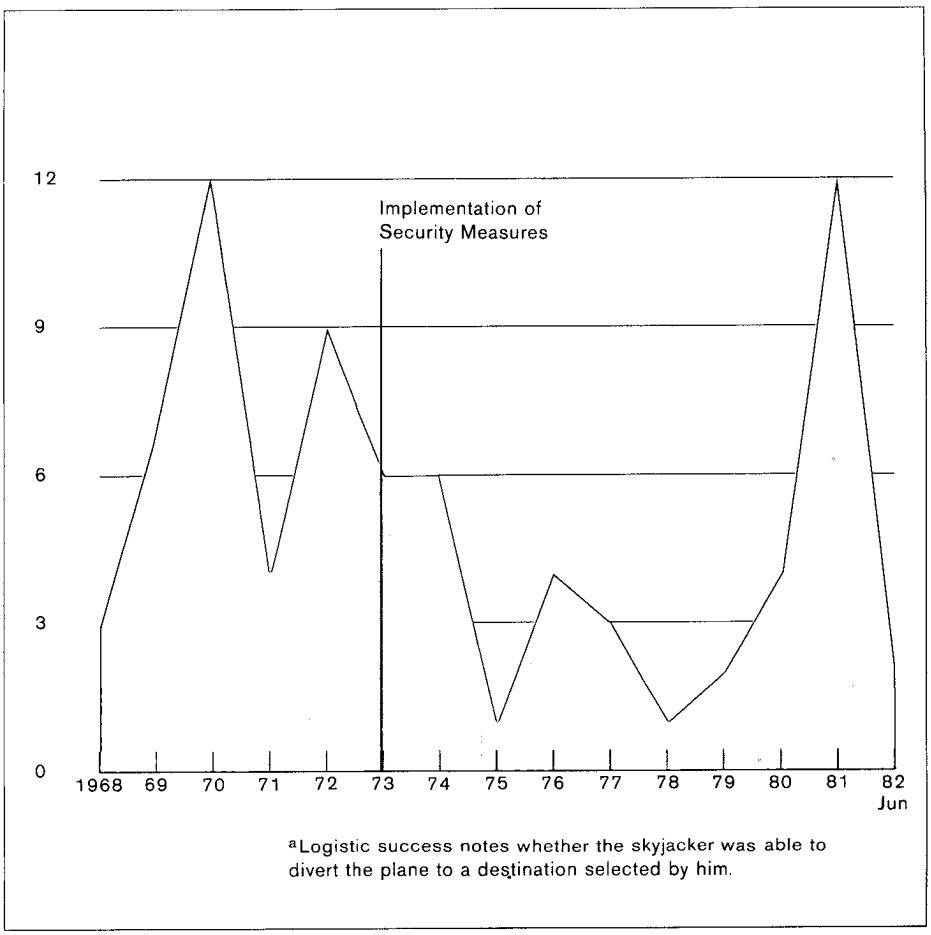
Terrorist Skyjackers' Logistic Success[a]

January 1968–June 1982



[a]Logistic success notes whether the skyjacker was able to divert the plane to a destination selected by him.

when Indonesian commandos stormed the plane, and the Dev Sol hijack of a Turkish plane to Bulgaria on 24 May, which was concluded in midoperation when the passengers overpowered two of the terrorists. Probably as a result of these well-publicized failures, fewer skyjack attempts were made during the remainder of 1981. There was, however, a spate of attempts to hijack planes in Eastern Europe to seek asylum in the West.

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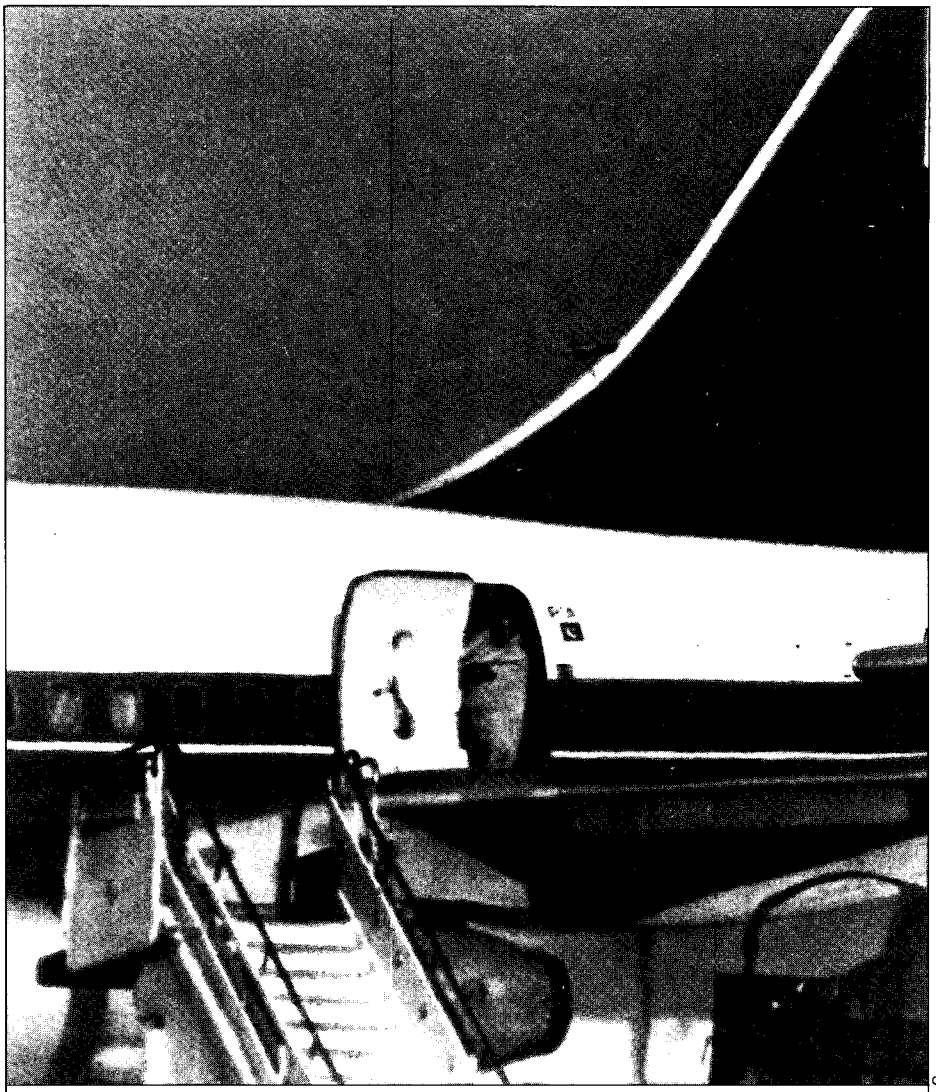

Sygma

2 March 1981. Release of passengers held in Pakistan Liberation Army hijack of a Pakistani airliner, after 13 days of negotiations.

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Appendix A

Terrorist Groups Responsible for Skyjackings

This list includes names of organizations responsible either by claim or attribution for specific skyjackings noted in the statistics. Some attacks may have been carried out without the approval or even foreknowledge of that organization's leaders. Claims of responsibility may also have been falsely made by opponents of the organization in an attempt to discredit it.

Some of the names listed are cover names for organizations wishing to deny responsibility for a particular action. Some names may have been used by common criminals to mislead police investigators or by psychotics seeking public recognition.

Abd al-Nasir Movement (Egypt)
Al Sadre Brigade (Lebanon)
Ananda Marg (India)
Arab Nationalist Youth Organization for the Liberation of Palestine (ANYOLP)
Armed Communist League (Mexico)
Armed Revolutionary Vanguard of Palmares (VAR-Palmares; Brazil)
Bandera Roja (Venezuela)
Black September Organization (Fatah/Palestinian)
Croatian National Liberation Forces
Dal Khasa (India)
Darul Islam Holy War Command (Indonesia)
Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)
Dev Sol (Turkey)
Dominican Republic Leftist Revolutionaries
Dutch Revolutionaries
Eagles of National Unity (South Yemen)
Eritrean Liberation Front (Ethiopia)
Freedom for the Serbian Fatherland (SEPO)
Honduran Revolutionary Union (URP)
International Organ of the Proletariat (Venezuela)
Japanese Red Army
Jordanian Free Officers Movement
Kabataang Makabayan (Philippines)
Kashmiri Liberation Front (India)
Komando Jihad (Indonesia)
Kurdish Sympathizers
Leftist Command of Chile
Lorenzo Zelaya Popular Revolutionary Forces (Honduras)
Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF; Philippines)
National Liberation Alliance (ALN; Brazil)
National Liberation Army (ELN; Colombia)
National Liberation Party (Lebanon)
Nepalese Communist Party
Organization for the Struggle Against World Imperialism
Pakistan Liberation Army (PLA)
Palestine Popular Struggle Front
People's Liberation Army (EPL; Colombia)
People's Revolutionary Army (ERP-ARG; Argentina)
People's Revolutionary Army Zero Point (Punto Cero, Argentina)
Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)
PFLP–General Command
Popular Liberation Movement (MPL; Djibouti)
Provisional Irish Republican Army (Provos)
Revolutionary Youth Movement (Tanzania)
Revolutionary Movement of the Left (Chile)
Turkish People's Liberation Army (TPLA)
19th of April Movement (M-19; Colombia)

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Appendix B

Major Airlines Whose Planes Have Been Skyjacked by Terrorists

This list includes the names of major airlines that have been victims of terrorist skyjacking attempts since January 1968. Derived from media coverage of these attempts, the list may not cover airlines that have not reported terrorist attempts.

Aerolineas Argentinas
Aeropesca (Colombia)
Lineas Aeropostal Venezolana (Venezuela)
Air Djibouti
Air France
Air Kuwait
Air Tanzania Corporation
Air Vietnam
Alyemda (South Yemen)
Alia Royal Jordanian Airlines
Alitalia (Italy)
American Airlines
Austral Lineas Areas (Argentina)
AVENSA (Venezuela)
Avianca (Colombia)
British Airways
Cruzeiro do Sul (Brazil)
Delta Airlines (United States)
Dundalk Aero Club (Ireland)
Ecuatoriana International (Ecuador)
Egyptian Airlines
El Al Airlines (Israel)
Ethiopian Airlines
Garuda Indonesian Airlines
Global International Airlines (United States)
Indian Airlines
Iran National Airlines
Iraqi Airways
JAL (Japan)
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines (the Netherlands)
LACSA (Costa Rica)
LADECO (Chile)
LAN (Chile)
LANICA (Nicaragua)
Libyan Arab Airlines
Lufthansa (Germany)
Malay Air System (Malaysia)
Middle Eastern Airlines (Egypt)
Mexicana de Aviacion (Mexico)
Netherlands Antilles Airlines
Olympic Airways (Greece)
Pakistan International Airlines
PAL (Philippines)
Pan Am (United States)
Royal Nepalese Airlines
Sabena (Belgium)
SAHSA (Honduras)
SAM (Colombia)
SAS (Scandinavian Airlines System)
Swissair
TAME (Ecuador)
TAP (Portugal)
Turkish Airways
TWA (United States)
VASP (Brazil)
VIASA (Venezuela)

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Appendix C

A Chronology Of Significant Terrorist Skyjackings 1968-82

The country over which the skyjack occurred is in bold type before each incident.

1968

22 July
Italy. An El Al 707 in flight from Rome to Tel Aviv was hijacked by three members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). They ordered the plane with its 10 crewmembers and 38 passengers to Dar Al-Bayda Airport, Algeria, and demanded the release of an unspecified number of Arabs from Israeli jails. The Algerians detained the hijackers and immediately released 23 non-Israeli passengers. Israel eventually released 16 Arabs in exchange for the hostages, who were set free on 1 September.

1969

29 August
Italy. TWA Flight 840 from Rome to Tel Aviv was hijacked by two members of the PFLP. Upon landing in Damascus, Syria, they ordered all passengers off the plane and blew up the cockpit. Several passengers were injured while evacuating the aircraft, none seriously. The Syrians released all passengers except six Israelis, who were held for the release of prisoners in Israeli jails. On 5 December, the International Red Cross arranged for return of the hostages to Israel in exchange for 13 Syrian and 58 Egyptian prisoners.

1970

31 March
Japan. A Japan Air Lines 727 from Tokyo to Kukuoka was hijacked shortly after takeoff by nine members of the Japanese Red Army (JRA), who demanded to be flown to P'yongyang, North Korea. An elaborate ruse to make Seoul's airport look like P'yongyang failed, but the hijackers were persuaded to let the passengers disembark in exchange for passage to North Korea. They flew to P'yongyang on 3 April and were granted asylum.

22 July
Lebanon. An Olympic Airways 727 carrying 47 passengers from Beirut to Athens was hijacked by five members of the Palestine Popular Struggle Front. They demanded the release of seven fedayeen detained in Greek jails. With the International Red Cross acting as intermediary, the Greek Government yielded to the terrorists' terms, and the fedayeen were released on 12 August.

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6 September

West Germany. Two members of the PFLP hijacked a TWA 707 flying from Frankfurt to New York and ordered it to land at Dawson's Field, Zerka, Jordan, a former British Air Force landing strip in the desert.

Switzerland. Two members of the PFLP hijacked a Swissair DC-8 en route from Zurich to New York and ordered it to land at Dawson's Field in Jordan.

India. Three members of the PFLP hijacked a Bahraini BOAC VC-10 en route from Bombay to London and ordered it to land at Dawson's Field in Jordan.

Once the three planes were in Jordan, the hijackers demanded the release of fedayeen held in West German, Swiss, and Israeli prisons. On 12 September, the planes were evacuated and destroyed by PFLP explosive experts. Jordanian troops undertook a major military campaign to oust Palestinian forces from Jordan, and negotiations became of secondary importance to the embattled PFLP. The hostages were rescued by Jordanian troops. On 29 September, the Swiss Government announced the release of seven Arab guerrillas by Switzerland, West Germany, and the United Kingdom.

Netherlands. A Pan Am flight from Amsterdam was hijacked by two members of the PFLP, who ordered the plane to Cairo where it was destroyed. The two were supposed to have been part of a PFLP group that was to hijack an El Al plane to Dawson's Field, but they were denied boarding on that plane. Seven passengers were injured while evacuating the plane.

Netherlands. PFLP terrorist Leila Khaled and Nicaraguan Patrick Arguello attempted to hijack an El Al aircraft on the Tel Aviv–Amsterdam–New York route. An armed El Al steward shot and killed the male hijacker and Khaled was overpowered by passengers. The plane landed in London. Their original plan had called for them to join the other planes hijacked by the PFLP on this day to Dawson's Field in Jordan. Khaled was released on 29 September in exchange for the release of the hostages at Dawson's Field.

1971

30 January

India. An Indian Airlines flight en route from Srinagar to Jammu was hijacked to Lahore, Pakistan, by two members of the Kashmiri Liberation Front. They demanded asylum and the release of 36 prisoners held in Kashmir by the Indian Government. The Indian Government refused to

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negotiate with the terrorists, whereupon they blew up the plane. Both terrorists were injured. The Indians protested the Pakistani handling of the case and denied them overflight privileges for military and eventually for commercial planes.

1972

22 February

India. Five Palestinian terrorists hijacked a Lufthansa 747 en route from New Delhi to Athens and diverted it to Aden, South Yemen. The passengers were released, and the West German Government paid a $5 million ransom for the release of the 16 crewmembers. The hijackers later surrendered to South Yemeni authorities, who released them on 27 February.

8 May

Austria. A Sabena plane, flying the Vienna–Athens–Tel Aviv route, was hijacked by four members of the Black September Organization (BSO) and diverted to Lod Airport. The group demanded the release of 317 fedayeen prisoners. Israeli security forces attacked the plane and killed two hijackers. Five passengers were wounded in the gunfight and one later died. Life sentences were given to the two surviving hijackers.

15 August

Argentina. Six members of the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) escaped from Rawson Prison and hijacked an Austral Airliner to Santiago, Chile. They were granted political asylum by President Allende, who allowed them to fly to Cuba on 25 August. The Argentine Government, which had demanded extradition, recalled its ambassador the next day. The government's response caused demonstrations throughout Argentina, and the day has become a major anniversary for leftist revolutionaries in that country.

15 September

Sweden. Three Croatian emigres hijacked an SAS airliner and ransomed its passengers for six Croatian terrorists being held in Swedish jails. The aircraft was flown to Spain, where the Croatians surrendered to Spanish authorities. The six who had been released in Sweden were permitted to leave Spain for Paraguay in June 1974. On 5 December 1974, a Spanish military court sentenced the three hijackers to 12 years in prison. On 13 February 1975, General Franco granted them a full pardon.

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29 October

Lebanon. Two members of BSO hijacked Lufthansa flight 615 (en route from Beirut to Munich) to secure the release of the three surviving members of the BSO team that had massacred 11 members of the Israeli Olympic team in Munich on 5 September 1972. The West German Government complied, and the hijacked plane was kept flying until the three released terrorists landed at Zagreb, Yugoslavia, where the hijacked plane picked them up. The plane was flown to Tripoli, Libya, where the passengers and crew were released.

8 December

Ethiopia. An Ethiopian Airlines B-720 from Addis Ababa to Asmara and Paris was hijacked shortly after takeoff by seven students, all members of the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), who demanded the release of imprisoned members of the ELF. Security guards immediately opened fire. One of the hijackers exploded a hand grenade, which tore a hole in the floor of the first-class section, stopped one of the engines, and damaged the rudder. Of the 100 passengers, nine were wounded. Six of the hijackers died; the seventh was seriously wounded. The plane landed safely in Addis Ababa.

1973

25 November

Lebanon. Three armed members of the Arab Nationalist Youth Organization for the Liberation of Palestine (ANYOLP), a front organization for the PFLP, hijacked a KLM 747 with 247 passengers aboard as it was en route from Beirut to New Delhi. After stops in Cyprus, Libya, Malta, and Dubai, the hijackers surrendered to Dubai authorities, who offered the terrorists safe conduct in exchange for the hostages. On 8 December the hijackers were taken to Abu Dhabi, where they presumably were turned over to the PLO.

17 December

Italy. Five Palestinian terrorists opened fire in the customs area of the Leonardo DaVinci Airport in Rome. The terrorists took several hostages, proceeded to a Pan Am 707 that was loading for a flight to Beirut, and threw hand grenades into the plane—killing or injuring numerous passengers. The terrorists, with their hostages, then boarded and hijacked a Lufthansa aircraft to Athens and Kuwait, where the hijackers surrendered. They were flown to Cairo on 2 March 1974, where they were to be tried by the PLO, but Egyptian authorities would not release them. They were eventually released in November 1974, on the demand of four other fedayeen hijackers, and went to Libya.

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1974

3 March

Lebanon. A British Airways flight en route to London with 102 persons aboard was hijacked by two armed members of the ANYOLP shortly after takeoff from Beirut. The plane was diverted to Amsterdam, where the passengers and crew were permitted to evacuate the plane before the hijackers destroyed the aircraft by setting the plane's liquor supply on fire. The duo was captured by police while running from the plane; they were sentenced to five years' imprisonment but were released several months later in an agreement with four other hijackers who demanded their release.

21 November

Dubai. After climbing over an airport fence, four members of the ANYOLP seized a British Airways jetliner on a refueling stop en route from London to Singapore. They forced the pilot to fly to Libya and then to Tunis, where they demanded the release of 13 terrorists imprisoned in Cairo and two in the Netherlands. The terrorists wounded two members of the crew when they seized the plane and killed one passenger in public view during the prolonged negotiations in Tunis. Five of the fedayeen prisoners in Cairo and the two in the Netherlands were taken to Tunis and handed over to the hijackers. The terrorists surrendered to the Tunisian authorities on 25 November and released all remaining passengers and crew. They were subsequently turned over to the PLO and flown to an unknown destination.

1975

1 March

Iraq. Three armed men, all apparently Kurdish sympathizers, hijacked an Iraqi Airways plane on a domestic flight and diverted it to Tehran. A passenger was shot to death and 10 persons, including one hijacker, were wounded in a gun battle between the hijackers and Iraqi security officers aboard the plane. The hijackers surrendered to Iranian authorities in Tehran. On 7 April they were executed by an Iranian firing squad.

1976

7 April

Philippines. A Philippine Airlines (PAL) jet on a domestic flight was hijacked by three members of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) who demanded the release of four political prisoners and asylum. In Manila the 70 passengers were released in exchange for crewmembers and a PAL vice president who were retained as hostages. After several intermediary stops, the plane landed at Bangkok, where the Philippine Government provided another because of mechanical difficulties. The plane arrived in Libya on 13 April, and after some delay, the hijackers were given asylum in Libya.

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21 May

Philippines. A Philippines Airlines jet flying from Davao to Manila was hijacked by six members of the MNLF who diverted the plane to Zamboanga. Their demand of a ransom and a plane to fly them to Libya was refused. After 48 hours of stalemate, the plane exploded in flames in an exchange of gunfire between the hijackers and Philippine troops. Ten passengers and three hijackers were killed, and 22 hostages were injured. The three surviving hijackers were subsequently convicted and sentenced to death.

27 June

Greece. An Air France aircraft en route from Tel Aviv to Paris was hijacked out of Athens by seven members of the PFLP. After refueling at Benghazi, Libya, the aircraft flew to Entebbe Airfield in Uganda, where the crew and more than 240 passengers were held hostage. The hijackers demanded the release of 53 terrorists imprisoned in Israel, West Germany, France, Switzerland, and Kenya. They were provided additional weapons by the Ugandans, who also guarded the hostages. On 1 July Israeli commandos attacked the airport and secured the release of the remaining hostages. Three hostages and one Israeli officer were killed in the raid, as well as seven hijackers and a number of Ugandan soldiers.

23 August

Egypt. An Egypt Air 737 en route from Cairo to Luxor was hijacked by three armed terrorists claiming to be members of the Abd al-Nasir Movement. They demanded to be flown to Libya, but allowed the plane to land at Luxor to refuel. They demanded the release of five Libyans imprisoned in Cairo in connection with two assassination attempts. Egyptian commandos stormed the plane and captured the hijackers; no passengers were injured. The terrorists were convicted and sentenced to hard labor for life.

10 September

United States. A TWA 727 from New York to Chicago with 86 passengers on board was hijacked by six Croatian nationalists, who diverted the plane to Newfoundland, Iceland, and finally Paris. Their demands included dropping propaganda leaflets over London, Montreal, and Paris and publication of a communique in major newspapers, both of which were met. The hijackers also directed police to a bomb placed in a subway locker at Grand Central Terminal in New York. While trying to deactivate the bomb, one policeman was killed and three others were seriously injured. The group surrendered to French authorities, and they were immediately returned to the United States. All the passengers and crew were released unharmed.

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8 July

Lebanon. A Kuwaiti plane en route from Beirut to Kuwait was hijacked by six Fatah dissidents who claimed to be members of the Friends of the Arabs. They demanded the release of 300 prisoners in Arab jails. The aircraft landed in Kuwait for refueling, and the hijackers released their hostages in two groups there, in exchange for safe conduct to South Yemen. Once airborne with three Arab officials who had volunteered to serve as hostages, the hijackers redirected the plane to Damascus. After 10 hours of unsuccessful negotiations with Syrian authorities, five of the hijackers overpowered their leader and surrendered to the Syrians.

28 September

India. JRA guerrillas hijacked a Japan Airlines plane shortly after takeoff from Bombay and forced it to land in Dacca, Bangladesh. The Japanese Government agreed to the terrorists' demands for the release of nine imprisoned Japanese and $6 million in exchange for the more than 150 hostages on the aircraft. Some hostages were released at refueling stops in Kuwait and Syria. Upon arrival in Algiers on 3 October, the hijackers, along with six of the released prisoners, released the remaining hostages and surrendered to Algerian authorities. They were expelled from Algeria shortly thereafter, and their whereabouts are unknown.

13 October

Spain. A Lufthansa plane en route from Majorca to Frankfurt was hijacked by four Arabic-speaking terrorists, who directed the plane to refueling stops in Rome, Nicosia, and several Middle Eastern countries. They demanded a $15-million ransom and the release of two Palestinians jailed in Turkey and 11 German terrorists. The hijackers killed the pilot before the plane arrived in Mogadiscio, Somalia, on 17 October. The next day an FRG commando team stormed the plane, freeing all of the hostages, killing three of the terrorists, and wounding the fourth, who was convicted and received a 20-year prison sentence.

4 December

Malaysia. A Malaysian aircraft that was hijacked shortly after departing Kuala Lumpur crashed while preparing to land in Singapore. There were no survivors. Investigators later announced that the hijackers shot both pilots just before the crash. No group claimed responsibility.

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1979

20 June

United States. An American Airlines jet from New York to Chicago was hijacked by a Serbian nationalist, who demanded the release of a Serbian priest imprisoned in Chicago and a safe flight to Peru. The hijackers, the priest, and four other Serbs—all members of Freedom for the Serbian Fatherland (SEPO) —had been convicted on 24 May for the 1975 bombing of the Yugoslav Consulate in Chicago. After landing in Chicago, the hijacker released the passengers and all but three crewmembers. His lawyer boarded the plane and they flew to Ireland's Shannon Airport, where he was taken into custody by Irish authorities who returned him to the United States.

7 September

Lebanon. Three Lebanese Shiite Muslims hijacked an Alitalia DC-8 en route from Tehran to Rome shortly after a refueling stop in Beirut. They were protesting the 1978 disappearance of their spiritual leader, Imam Mousa Sadr, and demanded passage to Cuba, where they wished to present their case for Sadr to the Havana Nonaligned Conference. The plane landed in Rome for refueling and negotiation. Cuba granted permission for the plane to land there providing all hostages were released in Rome, but a tropical storm precluded that flight, and the hijackers were persuaded to fly to Iran. Iranian authorities took the hijackers into custody; Italian officials said they would request extradition.

1980

13 October

Turkey. A Turkish Airlines 727 on a flight from Munich to Ankara was hijacked by five gunmen of unknown affiliation after departing Istanbul for Ankara. The plane was diverted to Diyarbakir for refueling. The hijackers demanded to be flown to Tehran (the pilot refused because of its location in a war zone) and then to Jidda, Saudi Arabia. Turkish Army commandos stormed the plane and freed the more than 100 passengers and crew, killing one passenger and one of the hijackers. Four of the hijackers and 13 passengers were wounded.

15 December

Colombia. An Avianca airliner on a domestic flight between Bogota and Pereira was hijacked by 12 guerrillas, members of the 19th of April Movement (M-19), in an apparent attempt to disrupt the Latin American summit meeting that was to open in Santa Marta, Colombia, the next day. The plane made stops in Santa Marta, Barranquilla, Panama City, Mexico City (for refueling), and Havana, where the hijackers were taken into custody by Cuban authorities. Various numbers of passengers were released at each stop. No injuries were reported.

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2 March

Pakistan. Three armed hijackers forced a Pakistan International Airlines plane, on a flight from Karachi to Peshawar with 148 passengers and crew on board, to fly to Kabul, Afghanistan. The trio identified themselves as members of a group called Al Zulfiqar, a group reportedly connected with the Pakistan Liberation Army. They demanded the release of people detained during the recent student unrest in Pakistan. During the course of the negotiations in Kabul, the hijackers released 28 women and children and shot and killed one passenger who was identified as the first secretary of the Pakistani Embassy in Tehran. On 8 March the hijackers forced the aircraft to fly to Damascus, Syria. After further negotiations with Pakistani officials, 54 of the jailed prisoners were released and flown to Syria on 14 March. The hijackers surrendered to Syrian authorities later that day.

24 March

Honduras. After taking off from Tegucigalpa, a New Orleans–bound Honduran 737 was hijacked by five armed individuals who claimed to be members of the Popular Liberation Movement (MPL)—the armed action unit of the People's Revolutionary Union (URP), an offshoot of the Communist Party of Honduras. The plane with 93 passengers and crew was diverted to Managua, Nicaragua, where the hijackers released 37 passengers and demanded the release of 15 Salvadoran leftists jailed in Honduras. When negotiations failed to materialize, the hijackers ordered the pilot to fly to Panama. There—apparently under the impression that the Government of Honduras would free the Salvadoran prisoners—they released the remaining hostages and turned themselves over to Panamanian authorities.

28 March

Indonesia. Five hijackers armed with handguns and grenades forced a Garuda Indonesian Airways DC-9 to fly to Penangy, Malaysia, where one hostage was released. The plane was refueled and flown to Bangkok, where the hijackers demanded the release of 20 people jailed in Indonesia. The hijackers were described as members of a fanatic Muslim group called the Komando Jihad (Holy War Command). A British passenger and one of the Americans on board escaped on 29 March; the American was wounded by the hijackers as he ran from the plane. On 31 March Indonesian commandos stormed the plane; four of the five hijackers were killed in the gun battle, as well as the plane's captain and one commando. The remaining hijacker is apparently under arrest.

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24 May

Turkey. Four men hijacked a Turkish Airlines DC-9 on a domestic flight from Istanbul to Ankara shortly after it left Istanbul with 120 passengers and crew. The plane was diverted to Burgas airport in Bulgaria, where the hijackers demanded the release of prisoners from Turkish jails and a sum of money. They threatened to kill the five Americans on board if their demands were not met. On 25 May two of the hijackers left the plane to "hold a news conference" and were arrested by Bulgarian authorities. The pair who remained on the plane were overpowered by their hostages; five passengers were injured during the struggle. Turkish authorities identified two of the four terrorists as members of Dev Sol (Revolutionary Left) and have indicated that they plan to seek extradition.

26 September

Yugoslavia. While on a domestic flight, a Yugoslav Airlines Boeing 737 carrying more than 100 passengers and crew was hijacked just before landing in Belgrade. Three armed Croatians commandeered the plane and requested to be flown to Tel Aviv. The Israelis refused to permit the plane to land, and it then proceeded to Larnaca, Cyprus. The passengers and crew staged a mock fire and alarm and fled the plane by the emergency exits. The hijackers then surrendered to Cyprus police. They were returned to Belgrade under guard on 27 September.

7 December

Venezuela. Three airliners, carrying a total of more than 250 passengers and crew on domestic flights, were hijacked over Venezuela by members of Bandera Roja armed with hand grenades and automatic weapons. One plane was diverted to Aruba and then to Barranquilla, Colombia, joining the two other planes that had already arrived in that city. After 10 hours on the ground in Barranquilla, two of the planes flew to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and the third flew to Guatemala City, Guatemala. All three planes then proceeded to Panama and from there flew to Havana, Cuba, where hostages not previously freed were released and the hijackers taken into custody by the Cuban authorities. Their demands included a ransom of $10 million and freedom for seven Venezuelan political prisoners.

7 December

Italy. A Libyan jet on a flight from Zurich, Switzerland, to Tripoli, Libya, with 44 passengers and crew was diverted to Beirut, Lebanon, by three Lebanese Muslim gunmen. After refueling, the plane flew to Athens, Greece, where a woman and two children were released. The jet then flew to Rome, Italy, and back to Beirut. During the second stop

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in Beirut the hijackers took hostage 30 passengers deplaning from a flight that had just arrived from London and held them until the hijacked plane was refueled. The Libyan aircraft then flew to Tehran, Iran, where Iranian officials pledged to mediate the hijackers' demands for information on the fate of their spiritual leader Mussa Sadr, who had disappeared in August 1978 during a visit to Libya. On 8 December the plane left Tehran and for the third time landed in Beirut. After brief negotiations with Nabih Barri, the Amal leader who was present at the airport, the hijackers released the 35 hostages they were holding and turned themselves over to airport security personnel and the Syrian contingent of the Arab deterrent force (ADF) present at the airport.

1982

27 January

Colombia. A Colombian 727 with approximately 130 passengers and crew, including two US citizens, was hijacked shortly after takeoff from Bogota. The seven hijackers claimed to be members of the M-19. They forced the pilot to return to Bogota and then to fly to Cali, where the aircraft was damaged when it hit a truck that was blocking the runway. The hijackers threatened to blow up the plane and all remaining hostages if another aircraft was not provided. A small executive jet was provided by Colombian authorities and the hijackers flew to San Andres for refueling and then on to Havana, where they requested asylum.

24 February

Lebanon. Gunmen attempted to hijack a Kuwaiti 707 just after the plane landed at the Beirut Airport from Tripoli, Libya. The 12 Shiite gunmen ran toward the plane firing weapons, forced 105 deplaning passengers and crew back onto the plane, and demanded the release of their Shiite leader Imam Mousa Sadr. There were several exchanges of gunfire, and one burst of automatic weapons fire hit the control tower before the hijackers agreed to release their hostages in return for safe conduct to a Syrian army post near the border. Two people were reported to have been wounded during the incident. As a result of the attempted hijacking, the airline announced that it was suspending all of its regular flights to Beirut.

26 February

Tanzania. Four armed men, accompanied by their families, hijacked an Air Tanzania 737 on a domestic flight with about 100 passengers and crew. The plane was forced to fly to Kenya, Saudi Arabia, Greece, and Stansted, England. The hijackers claimed to be members

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of the Revolutionary Youth Movement of Tanzania. They threatened to blow up the plane (explosives were found wired to the aircraft doors and in a toilet, according to one press report) if President Nyerere did not resign. The co-pilot was slightly injured just before the plane landed in Athens. The hijackers released the remaining hostages in Stansted and then sent their weapons off the plane with two of their children before surrendering to British authorities.

28 April

Honduras. An airliner on a domestic flight from La Ceiba with 48 passengers, including 13 US citizens, was hijacked by four members of the Lorenzo Zelaya Popular Revolutionary Forces. They diverted the plane to Tegucigalpa Airport, where they released 15 passengers and demanded $1 million and the release of political prisoners held by the Honduran Government. On 1 May, 11 passengers escaped from the plane during the early morning hours; two people were injured during the escape. The hijackers released the remaining 15 hostages in exchange for a plane to fly them to Cuba. Cuban authorities took the four into custody upon their arrival in Havana.

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